

PUBLIC

AI Index: MDE 24/008/2006

26 January 2006

Further Information on UA 246/05 (24/087/2005, 21 September 2005) and follow-ups (MDE 24/091/2005, 11 October 2005; MDE 24/0984/2005, 1 November 2005; MDE 24/104/2005, 28 November 2005) - Incommunicado detention/torture and ill-treatment

SYRIA

**Mustafa Omar Abdi Malik (m), aged 19, Somali national
Muhammad Isma'il al-Daj (m) aged 19
Muhammad Anis al-Turk (m), aged 18**

Amnesty International has learned that Mustafa Omar Abdi Malik has been transferred from detention in the al-Fayha Political Security Branch to the *Far' Filistin* (Palestine Branch) of Military Intelligence in Damascus. The use of torture against detainees held in *Far' Filistin* is systematic.

Mustafa Omar Abdi Malik has been detained since 6 September 2005. His family learned of his transfer on 21 January. His mother tried to visit him at *Far' Filistin* but was not allowed to see him, although the authorities acknowledged that he was there and permitted her to hand over some clothes for him.

It is not known whether Muhammad Isma'il al-Daj and Muhammad Anis al-Turk remain in al-Fayha Political Security Branch. They have reportedly been held since 12 September 2005. All three men continue to be held incommunicado and without charge, apparently because of allegations that they are involved with "Islamist" groups. They remain at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

An Amnesty International delegation recently raised concerns about Mustafa Omar Abdi Malik, Muhammad Isma'il al-Daj and Muhammad Anis al-Turk in a meeting with officials from the Syrian Ministry of Interior. They were given no information on the three men, and a request to visit them and other political detainees was refused.

The family of Mustafa Omar Abdi Malik had requested in November 2005 that Amnesty International take no further campaigning action on his behalf. However, they are now keen for the organization to recommence work on his case.

Nineteen-year-old Seraj Khalbous, who was detained along with Mustafa Omar Abdi Malik, Muhammad Isma'il al-Daj and Muhammad Anis al-Turk, was hospitalised for emergency treatment after being tortured during interrogation. After being discharged from hospital in October 2005, he was allowed to return home. He is believed to be in poor health.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Torture is widespread in Syrian detention and investigation centres, particularly during pre-trial detention, and during periods of incommunicado detention. Over the years, Amnesty International has documented 38 types of torture and ill-treatment used against detainees in Syria. "Confessions" extracted under duress are systematically used as "evidence" in Syrian courts, and the defendants' claims that they have been tortured are almost never investigated. In 2004 at least nine people are reported to have died as a result of torture and ill-treatment suffered while in custody.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Arabic, English, French or your own language:

- expressing grave concern at reports of the continuing incommunicado detention of Mustafa Omar Abdi Malik, Muhammad Isma'il al-Daj and Muhammad Anis al-Turk, which puts them at grave risk of torture;

- urging the authorities to ensure that Mustafa Omar Abdi Malik, Muhammad Ismai'l al-Daj and Muhammad Anis al-Turk are not tortured;
- calling on the authorities to release these men immediately unless they are to be promptly charged with a recognizably criminal offence and given a prompt and fair trial.

APPEALS TO:

His Excellency President Bashar al-Assad
President of the Republic
Presidential Palace
Abu Rummaneh, Al-Rashid Street
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
Fax: + 963 11 332 3410
Salutation: Your Excellency

Acting Minister of Interior
Ministry of Interior
Merjeh Circle
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
Fax + 963 11 222 3428
Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency Muhammad al-Ghafari
Minister of Justice
Ministry of Justice
Al-Nasr Street
Damascus
Syrian Arab Republic
Fax: + 963 11 666 2460
Salutation: Your Excellency

His Excellency General Hassan Ali Turkmani
Minister of Defence
Ministry of Defence
Omayyad Square
Damascus
Syrian Arab Republic
Fax: + 963 11 223 7842
Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of Syria accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 9 March 2006.